NEW PUBLICATIONS.

THE DECAY OF MODERN PREACHING. An Essay. By J. P. Mahappy. 12mo. pp. 160. Macmillan & Co. That the modern man feels an impatience of preaching is unquestionably true; why he feels it Professor Mahafly attempts to explain in several well-considered divisions of his subject. Among the historical causes of the decay of preaching he mentions first the lack of novelty, a charm with which the apostles seized upon men's minds. The hearer of to-day is tired of repetitions of what he already knows very well. To adjure men to believe in certain doctrines is to ask them to do what they already profess to do. The subtle distinctions now made be tween intellectual belief and saving belief will not, our author claims, lay hold of the world as the old preaching did. The stubborn adherence to old formulas and to aphorisms which if they have not lost their meaning have become mere truisms has helped to decrease the power of preaching. The growth of education is another historical cause for this decadence. The preacher and his audience stand on the same level; men read and exercise their private judgment and criticise the preacher's arguments from a vantage-ground of knowledge and reflection equal to his own. They are no longer in the attitude of chilren drinking in the words of one wiser, stronger and better than they. Christianity, too, and modern civilization have quieted the wild passions and conflicts of men, so that they no longer, like the early believers, seek spiritual peace and a spiritual liberty beyond the chances of war and the caprice of tyrants.

Among the social causes of pulpit decadence is so ciety's devotion to uniformity-its disinclination to be disturbed or alarmed, and its desire to hear little more than a confirmation of its prejudices. Prosor Mahaffy is speaking for English audiences when he regrets that to be amusing in the pulpit is considered a great crime; Americans, it has of late years been seen, do not disdain humor in sacred Modern society, our author adds, has done its best to make preaching a perfunctory duty, and it has succeeded. It is now thought improper to carry on serious debate in the pulpit; and congregations even weary of controversial discourse. Then the marriage of the clergy is another social cause of pulpit decadence. The troubles and mistakes of household life are apt to be brought up against the ideal standard of the clergyman's teaching; and they, moreover, invade his study and distract his thoughts from his sermons. Professor Mahatly is of course again speaking for England when he says that the abler young men of the day do not adopt the clerical profession, and that the preachers as a body are below even the average in intellect. "I remember very well," he says, "indeed painfully well-a crass of divinity students which I instructed in the Epistle to the Romans, and after laboring a whole term with all possible care, and making them go over the argument and write it out and rehearse it, they confessed to me in a body at the end of the term that they had made no advance in it whatever, for that none of them was able to follow an argument. They were not many,-eight, I think,-and such a case only occurred to me once in many years' teaching; but in every year there were some men of this kind-men who deliberately adopted the profession of religious teaching, with the consciousness that they could not possibly understand what they had to teach. They were, in fact, adopting this profession because they were too dull for any other. If it is no wonder on the one hand that such men produce no effect, and bring preaching into disrepute, on the other it is not the least surprising that the ministry should be regarded as suitable for a stupid man." Professor Mahaffy holds that intense piety is not

an indispensable requisite for religious teachingand that this piety, indeed, is far rarer than even great moral purity or great intellectual ability. The inconsistency which assumes an inward spirit-ual calling in the theological candidate, and which yet regards the ministry as a comfortable profession, to be ranked with law and medicine, contributes not a little to weaken the power of modern preaching. The man himself is apt to think that the requirement of the high ideal is but a formal demand which expects no fulfilment, and his preaching becomes unreal as his life is without earnestness. The general want of culture also is one of the greatest and most constant causes of failure in the pulpit, and with it the author mentions the lack of careful calculation in matters of rhetoric, and the want of that special theological training in which the layman expects the preacher

While Professor Mahaffy feels that a deep persnasion may lie in the happy employment of humor, he has no mercy on the excessive love of variety, " to which," he says, " may be ascribed the vulgar habit of introducing anecdotes in the pulpit, anecdotes which are not only foolish and beside the point but often practically untrue."

which are not only foolish and beside the point but often practically untrue."

Anecdotage in the pulpit gratifies only the most ignorant and vulgar of heavers, and from vulgar I mean to exclude all those, of however low degree, who come to hear seriously for the sake of spiritual benefit. The use of such illustrations is therefore very dangerous, and not to be resorted to without the greatest caution, especially in the assignment of motives or causes for the facts.

Of a similar character are those exentsions into politics, into popular science, into secular poetry, which sometimes occupy whole discourses, and which are listened to with attention and amusement, but seldom with profit. If these things be used in illustration of great truths, they are evidences of large culture in the preacher, and also have their real value. But to make variety the main object of preaching is to forget that eternal truths require more than a passing notice.

It may be considered the test of seriousness in an audience, and an index whether they come for improvement or for amusement, to inquire whether they insist on and appreciate variety beyond everything in their preacher. If they do, we may be sure that it is not their spiritual welfare which guides them, but the mere desire of spending an hour pleasantly, or less unpleasantly than usual, in their church on Sundays. And so those preachers in our large cities who affect this sort of variety are sure to command a considerable attention from the idle classes—I mean spiritual idlers—who now abound everywhere. It is a mistake to consider the preaching which attracts a crowd of this kind successful preaching. It does not even raise the preacher in the proper and sound estimation of those people whose opinion is but worth having; it is very likely to mislead him into the belief that he is doing good, when he is doing at test nothing at all. For in most cases he is doing worse than nothing; he is training his people to the sensation-sermon, an analogous thing to the sensation novel,

I To rival nature in art, the author concludes, im plies a very high stage of perfection, and " to avoid artificiality, cant, mannerism, extravagance, tediousness, is given not to the ignorant amateur but to the best and most thorough artist." So ends what is really a plea for a finer and wider theologi-

EMERSON'S PICTURE OF HIS HOME. HIS WIFE AN INCARNATION OF CHRIS-

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TANITY.

From a Leiter to Cartyle in The 'Athenanm.

CONCORD, May 10, 1838.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—Yesterday I had your letter of March. It quickens my purpose (always all but lipe) to write to you. If it had come earlier I should have been ecutimed in my original purpose of publishing "Select Miscellanies of T. C." As it is we are far on in the printing of the two first volumes (to make 900 pp.) of the papers as they stand in your list. And now I find we shall only get as far as the seventeenth or eighteenth article. I regret it, because this book will not embrace those papers I chiefly desire to provide people with, and it may be some time, in these years of bankruptcy and famine, before we shall think it prudent to publish two volumes more. But Loring is a good man, and thinks that many may desire to see the sources of the Nile. I, for my part, fancy that to meet the taste of the readers we should publish from the list backward, beginning with the paper on Scott, which has had the best reception ever known. Carlyleism is becoming so fashionable that the most austere seniors are glad to qualify their reprobation by applauding this review. I have agreed with the bookseller publishing the Miscellanies that he is to guarantee to you on every copy he sells 1,00 dollars. The cost of the work is not yet precisely ascertained. The work will probably appear in six or seven weeks. We print 1,000 copies. So whenever it is soid you shall have 1,000 dollars.

The French Revolution continues to find friends and purchasers. It has gone to New-Orleans, to Mashville, to Vicksburg. I have not been in Boston lately, but have determined that nearly or quite 800 copies should be gone. On July 1 I shall make the advice of Barnard, Adams & Co. in regard to remittances.

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mittances.

When you publish your next book I think you must send it out to me in sheets, and let us print it

here contemporaneously with the English edition. The celat of so new a book would help the sale very nunch. But a better device would be, that you should embark in the Victoria steamer and come in a fortnight to New York, and in twenty-four hours more to Concord. Your study armebar, fireplace and bed, long vacant, auguring expect you. Then you shall revise your proofs and dictate wit and learning to the New World. Think of it in good carnest. In aid of your friendliest purpose, it will set down some of the facts. I occupy, or improve, as we Yankees say, two acres only of God's earth, on which is my house, my kitchen garden, my orchard of thirty young trees, my empty barn. My house is now a very good one for comfort and abounding in room. Besides my house I have, I believe, 22,000 dollars, whose income in-ordinary years is six per cent. I have no other tithe or glebe except the income of my winter lectures, which was last winter 800 dollars. Well, with this income, here at home. I am a rich man. I stay at home and go abroad at my own expense. I have food, warnth, leisure, books, friends. Go away from home, I am rich nich of claims, so neither am I, who am not wise. But at home I am rich nich enough for ten brothers. My wife Liddian is an incarnation of Christianity—I call her Asia—and keeps my philosophy from Arthousias, in more many mother, whitest, mildest, most conservative of ladies, whose only exception to her universal preference for old thrugs is her son; my watching from morning to night; these and run for us, make all my household. Here I sit and read and write with very little system, and, as far as regards composition, with the most fragmentary result paragraphs incomprehensible, each seatence an inititely repellent particle.

In summer, with the aid of a neighbor, I manage my garden; and a week ago I set out on the west side of my house forty young pine trees to protect me or my son from the wind of January. The oranment of the place is the occasional presence of some ten or twelve persons good and w

A young engineer in Cambridge, by name Mc-Kean, volunteers his services in correcting the proofs of the Miscellanies, and he has your Errata-for the love of the reading. Shall we have anthra-cite coal or wood in your chamber? My old mother is glad you are coming.

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Almost a panic in the grain and provision markets at Chicago and great buoyancy in the New-York stock markets were the distinctive features of the beginning of the new week. Last week prices, both of stocks and products, were advanced because the Egyptian question was expected to enlarge the European demand for American products, and to-day prices of stocks were stimulated by an important decline in the prices for products. The seeming inconsistency of the two propositions we are not responsible for—we simply record the facts. Beyond question there has been no such confident buying of stocks for months as there was to-day, and it is equally certain that the parties who have been largely instrumental in making the recent advances were stondy and constant sellers of stocks all day. Yet the market absorbed the long stock put upon it, and hardly flinched under the pressure until during the last hour. And then the depression from best figures only in few instances was sufficient to reduce prices to or below those current at the opening of business. In that way, the notable exceptions are Denver and Rio Grande, Louisville and Nashville, Delaware, Lackawanna and Western, Illinois Central, Central of New-Jersey, Central and Hud-son, Reading and Western Union. But the final changes for any of the ordinarily active stocks show

advances of more than are represented by small

CLOSING PRICES PHILADELPHIA STOCKS.